

# TRAFFIC ZONE

VOLUME 28

Summer 2006



## *The "New" GDOT - Doing More with Less - Never Missing A Beat!*

In March of this year, GDOT (along with P&R and Environmental Services) was involved in an organization-wide restructuring to create a new Field Operations Department. Specific GDOT functions that transitioned to the new Department included Stormwater Maintenance, Asphalt Maintenance, Concrete Maintenance, Street Cleaning, Warehouse functions, and general Service Center administrative functions. The net effect to GDOT was a loss of approximately 60 percent of our departmental personnel (from 208 full time employees to 84 full time employees) and an approximate \$10 million reduction in our annual budget.

To accommodate the change and to create the most effective and efficient "new" GDOT possible, I restructured the department into four operating divisions (Planning, Engineering, Public Transportation, and Business and Operations), assigned our two remaining operational sections (Signals Maintenance and Signs and Marking Maintenance) to the newly renamed Business and Operations Division, and reassigned all other departmental functions previously handled by the Operations Division (i.e., Safety Program, City Core team representation, SCORE team representation, etc.) to others.

While the change in our personnel numbers and budget were significant (to be honest, the magnitude of the change did not really hit me until our recent Quality Luncheon...was it me or did the room shrink?), one thing that did not change very much was the sheer volume of services and responsibilities we continue to provide to the citizens of Greensboro and the City. In fact, if anything, I would submit that our overall departmental responsibilities and value to the community, the City, and each other actually increased with the reorganization.

How? Because we (GDOT) have effectively responded to the challenges of the reorganization by turning the change into a positive opportunity. We've used this opportunity to create new and specific employee, section, division, department, and inter-departmental improvements in the areas of work assignments, leadership,

*Continued on page 2*

## *Inside this issue:*

Administration .....	Page 2
Train Traffic GROWing at the Depot ...	Page 3
Parking .....	Page 4
Signs & Markings .....	Page 5
Technology & Business .....	Page 5
Engineering .....	Page 7
Planning .....	Page 8
Public Transportation .....	Page 10
The HEAT is on .....	Page 11
GDOT's (Brick) Stamp of Approval .....	Page 12
Inaugural Q Awards .....	Page 14



## **GDOT Mission Statement**

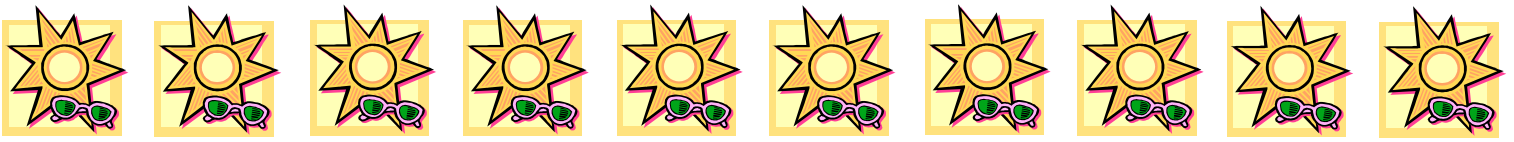
*We are committed to improving  
safety and mobility and  
providing quality services  
to our community by:*

- *Being Customer-focused and Team Oriented*
- *Being Cost-effective and Innovative*
- *Developing, Empowering, and Recognizing our Employees*



No, they aren't waiting for the question "Deal, or No Deal!" It's **Keith Scarborough** and **David Wrenn** of Business and Operations' Signs and Markings Division, having a good time at the GDOT Quality Luncheon. Check inside for more photos from the event.





# A D M I N I S T R A T I O N



## ***“Team Work Makes the Dream Work”***

Admin relies heavily on teamwork to complete a lot of time-sensitive tasks. We also provide back-up to the

designated individual for both financial and human resource services. We give credit to **Marcel Edwards** for the above tagline – Marcel uses it as part of her team recognition efforts.

### ***Administration’s Financial Team***

We’re backing up! **Michelle Shue** has partnered with **Linda Paschal** to form GDOT’s financial team. Michelle has attended Lawson data entry and Procurement Card training classes, which are required prior to being given authorization to log onto the Lawson system. She has experience entering office supply requisitions and processing vendor payments. She also has a Procurement Card and can make purchases up to \$500 per occurrence as long as the expenditure adheres to the City’s purchasing criteria.

In the next few weeks Michelle will expand her realm of services by handling travel arrangements, processing training expenses, registrations for conferences and seminars check orders, and other miscellaneous financial-related tasks.

Michelle and Linda will be happy to assist you at any time. When submitting any request please make sure to include proper documentation and any relevant information. If the information is incomplete it will cause processing delays.

### ***THE NEW GDOT, continued from page 1***

communications, and coordination. We are also effectively thriving and moving forward in this “must do more with less” environment (thanks in no small part to the can-do attitude of our employees, our continued implementation of our innovative Quality Program, our retooled work plan and budgeting review efforts, etc.)

In addition, I believe the reorganization has given us all a chance to reflect on our past, to place a higher focus, priority, and premium on all the services we provide, and to more fully and completely understand and appreciate the role that each GDOT employee plays on the GDOT team. Not to say that we ever took this for granted before, but with our smaller numbers,

### ***Admin’s 2006 Safety Campaign will be a “Safety Feud”***

Admin and the Business Section will come together as a team to challenge the MMOB Safety Committee to a “Safety Feud.” This event has not been scheduled but we are looking at a possible summer date

Both teams will be given 150 safety rules as a study guide in preparation for the “Feud” so that everyone will be given a fair chance to win. The study rules were derived from a list that the Admin staff created in the first “Bee Safe” campaign in 2004.

If you’re familiar with the TV show “Family Feud” you’ll know just how this challenge will work. We started with a survey of 20 questions that was sent to 117 employees throughout various City departments. As with any survey we received a 25% response. The response was enough to identify the sequence of importance of each question, which is what we needed to start the challenge.

We are excited about this challenge because we are introducing the importance of safety to employees outside of GDOT. If anyone in GDOT would like to attend this event please contact **Margie Chrismon** at 373-2864. This is the first time we’ve tried a safety feud, but we’re sure that by the end of the challenge we’ll all have learned something about office safety.

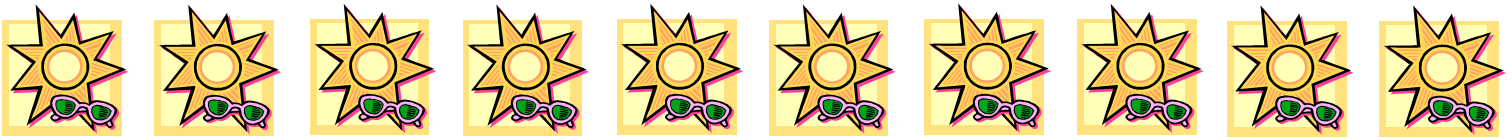


I think we now have a much deeper sense of pride, respect, and appreciation for the jobs we all do, the quality we provide, and the overall value our work creates and adds to the quality of life in Greensboro.

Continued thanks to each of you for your outstanding contributions and service to our community and for making GDOT such a great department! While our numbers have shrunk; I believe our hearts, minds, and passion to serve have grown to newer and higher levels. Keep up the great work GDOT, and don’t forget to schedule some well-deserved time off this summer to relax and spend with your family and friends.

*Jim Westmoreland, P.E.  
Director of Transportation*





## Back to Basics goes Xtreme

The GDOT Back to Basics program, now in its 6th year, has undergone a transformation, now becoming Back to Basics Xtreme. With the new B2B, we hope to stimulate increased participation by the GDOT employees which has fallen off recently. We hope that an Xtreme attitude towards B2B will increase the call volume over the next several years. There are a few ways this will happen.

- **Points and Prizes** – In the past, the points system was cumulative and non-ending. Continuing to build from year to year, some senior employees with many years under their belts had a huge advantage of newer staff persons. The point count will be reset every January 1st, and you will have the opportunity to redeem them for cool stuff.

- We will offer a different set of uniform enhancements that you can redeem your points for. With B2BXtreme, we will have gear sporting the GDOT insignia as well as B2B, allowing you to carry GDOT pride to work, on the golf course, at the beach and wherever you want to show it. In addition, every once in a while, there may be a special prize you can win just by participating during that particular prize period.

- **Challenges** – Everyone likes a good challenge, and we will have plenty of them to keep the spirit of competition alive. Engineering vs. Planning, boys vs. girls, you get the drift. We will even give you the opportunity to issue a challenge to others for one on one battles.

- **Reporting** – Our goal is to make reporting B2B items as convenient as possible for you. You will continue to have a number of ways of reporting your items you spot. The City of Greensboro Contact Center, the 24-hour Back to Basics Voice mailbox, service request forms on the internet and written submission slips. Choose any method that is most convenient to you

- **You** – The most important part. This program, no matter what we do, cannot be successful without you to spot needed repairs. Participation in B2B cannot rely solely on how valuable the prizes are, or the amount of personal recognition. It has to be the result of personal motivation to take pride in GDOT and serve our city.

Back to Basics Xtreme begins July 1. Look for information around GDOT and get ready to get Xtreme!

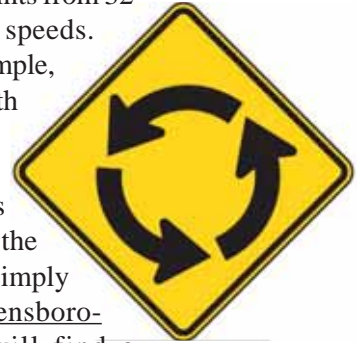


## Roundabout Queries?

New roundabouts are in the final stages of construction in Greensboro at Greene and McGee Streets and North Elm Street and Lake Jeanette Road. These circular intersections improve driving safety by eliminating left turns across traffic, reducing potential conflict points from 32 to 8, and lowering driving speeds.

Although their use is pretty simple, some who are unfamiliar with the roundabout may feel intimidated at first glance.

But never fear...GDOT has made it easy for you to learn the ABC's of the roundabout. Simply visit our website [www.greensboro-nc.gov/gdot](http://www.greensboro-nc.gov/gdot) where you will find a valuable users guide. If you do not have web access, call 373-GDOT and request a copy by mail.



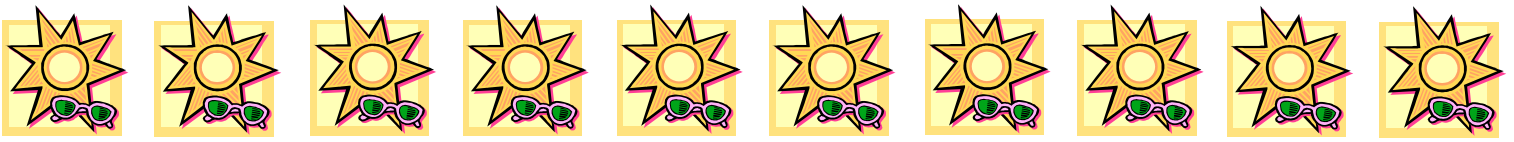
## Train Traffic GROwing at the Depot

*Build it...and they will come.*

When the City of Greensboro, the NC Department of Transportation, and the Federal Government teamed up to renovate the historic Southern Railway Depot, each predicted that the resulting multi-modal transportation hub would drive increased ridership on Amtrak at the Greensboro (GRO) station as well as the other transportation carriers to be located in the new facility. Recently, the NC DOT Rail Division released a summary of passenger and revenue levels since opening the new station. According to these numbers, their predictions have been dead on.

Between October 2004 and October 2005, passenger numbers on Amtrak in Greensboro have increased 39.17%. Passenger revenue for that same time frame rose 52%. April 2005 showed passenger revenue of \$165,600 while April 2006, the last month on record topped off at just over \$283,000. GRO's passenger loads have increased significantly since Greensboro Amtrak operations moved from the cramped Pomona Avenue location to the spacious J. Douglas Galyon Depot. Besides realizing the benefit of extra space, the new location of Amtrak now offers easy connections with GTA, PART Express, Greyhound, Carolina Trailways, and beginning this August, HEAT. Additionally, the changes at the facility have fit in nicely with the growing transformation of the downtown area.

For more about rail service in Greensboro and the Depot renovation project, visit [www.bytrain.org](http://www.bytrain.org).



# P A R K I N G

## ***Greene St. Deck Getting a Facelift***

To improve the quality appearance of the Greene St. Parking Deck, it is getting an internal facelift! Some of the improvements that will be taking place over the summer months include:

- Paint clean-up in the stairwell/elevator lobby towers on Greene St. and Washington St.
- Installation of fire-rated glass windows in stairwell/lobby doors (safety/security enhancement)
- A fresh coat of paint on the stairwell/lobby entrance doors (would you believe green??)
- New signs for lobby doors to indicate the parking deck levels.

Whew! By fall, Greene St. Deck should have a brand new look! Hope you'll come by to see us!

## ***Greene St. Streetscape***

As many of you know, Greene Street has been under construction for sometime. It looks like the work is just about done! Yeah! But there's one more job to be done - meter installation.

**Don Norman** and his crew will be working hard when the street construction is completed to install parking meters at the new on-street parking locations. This is quite a large project that will include meter installation for approximately 80 spaces. The new meters that are being installed are the decorative green meters that require a little more assembly for this newly designed streetscape.

Once the new markings and meter installation are completed, this area will be a great reflection for the governmental plaza area.

## ***What "Quality" means to me. . .***

The dictionary defines "quality" as "having a high degree of excellence".

The following are quotes from each of the parking supervisors that operate each of the four city-owned parking decks as to what "Quality Work" means to them. . .

*Quality is working to an end wherein excellence is readily noticed from all aspects!*

– **Avery Simmons (Greene St. Deck)**

*Quality means having excellent customer service and treating people with respect and integrity. Also doing the best that you can do on your job and keeping a good attitude about life and people.*

– **Sue Edmonds (Davie St. Deck)**

*Quality is providing excellent customer service, and maintaining a clean and safe deck that will make the customers feel good about parking in the Church St. Deck.*

– **Kay Martin (Church St. Deck)**

*Quality is doing the best job possible every day using the core values of the City of Greensboro. To provide the best customer service in terms of friendliness, helpfulness and safety.*

– **Jeff Teague (Bellemeade St. Deck)**



(L-R) Scott Jones, Don Norman  
and Wesley Gregory



Avery Simmons (Greene St. Deck)



Kay Martin (Church St. Deck)

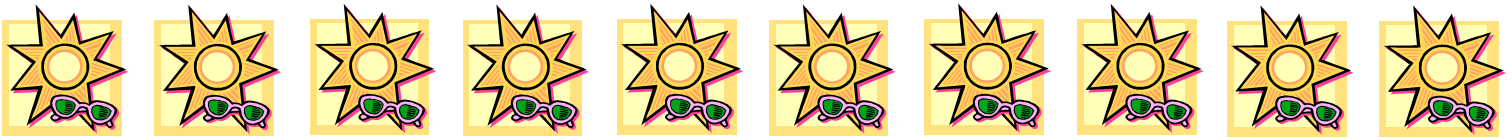


Jeff Teague (Bellemeade St. Deck)



Sue Edmonds (Davie St. Deck)





## S I G N S   &   M A R K I N G S

In the Signs & Markings Section, we have had many opportunities to provide quality services to the citizens of Greensboro as well as visitors from throughout the region. Assisting with traffic control during the ACC and NCAA Tournaments linked us up with some top-notch organizations and departments that we were proud to be associated with. We have also been working with the GDOT Engineering Team installing and enhancing various pedestrian crossing areas throughout the city. This project focuses on driver awareness and pedestrian safety and has made substantial positive impacts in our community. In March we started our pavement marking maintenance routines beginning with our Top 20 Thoroughfares via the Coordinated Service Delivery Program. We are continuing to look for new products that enhance or improve the effectiveness of our finished products. Currently we are looking into an upgrade of our long-line equipment that will apply a newly designed glass bead that would provide enhanced reflectivity of the pavement marking, even in rainy conditions. As we move into the summer months a few notable projects for the section will be pavement marking installation for the City and State paving contracts, various downtown and Coliseum special events and the Greene Street roundabout and marking revisions.

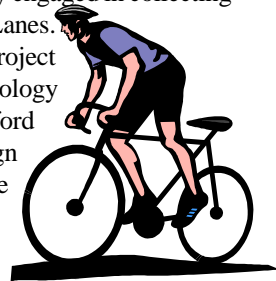


### STAFF ACCOMPLISHMENTS

We say farewell to Mike Mabe who took a promotion into the newly formed Field Operations Department. We sincerely thank you for your leadership, your expertise in the areas of work management and traffic engineering as well as your commitment to the CORE Values of the City of Greensboro. Good luck in your new role. Our new division manager, **Mike Cramer** has challenged our section to take Datastream to the next level. He has been diligent in creating more efficient and effective processes in tracking our data as well as providing staff with training and techniques to accomplish this goal. Congratulations to **Tim Hulon** and **Vince Price** who were both finalists for the Employee of the Year in the categories of Service Excellence and CORE Values.

## T E C H N O L O G Y   &   B U S I N E S S

The Technology/Business Section of GDOT has been very busy over the past several months. The section has been heavily engaged in collecting and updating field data for Guardrails, Bridges, Sidewalks, Signal/Non-Signal Intersections, Police Pistol Project and Bike Lanes. The Bike Lane Project is a unique and innovative project for GDOT. In conjunction with the Planning Division this project addresses the growing need to incorporate Bike Traffic with Vehicle and Pedestrian Traffic. In February of 2006, the Technology Section completed an extensive information gathering process on measurements of roadways in Greensboro and Guilford County. Well over 800 miles of roadway was measured and captured. This information was turned over to Toole Design Group, a consulting company, where they will put the information into a model to determine where and how to incorporate bike lanes in the City of Greensboro as well as Guilford County. Ultimately, this project will make biking in the City/County more joyful and a pleasant experience for all users. Also, our Guardrail Project was recently completed. This project covered three months of field work where we captured over 480 sections of guardrail in the City of Greensboro. Thanks for a job well done by **Jon Stewart**, **Antwyan Jones**, and interns **Jennings Bennett**, **Fred Haith**, **Zeb Holden**, and **Jim McGregor**.



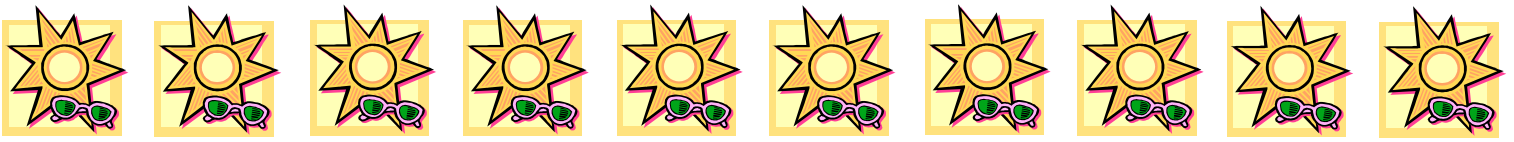
On the Datastream front, we just recently returned from a worldwide user conference in Greenville, SC. There were several countries involved as well as businesses/municipalities in the conference and many of them have asked to review our Datastream, GIS, and GPS setup. Furthermore, several municipalities (Sacramento, CA, Greenville, SC, San Antonio, TX, Sarasota, FL and others) have visited Greensboro to review our setup of Datastream. Also, I am happy to announce that we have the Parking Deck Section of GDOT now using Datastream and they are writing work orders so they can track work they have completed. In the near future, I plan to have GTA benefiting from the use of Datastream to write and track work orders too....so stay tuned.

The Signals Section is heavily involved in the design phase of our new traffic signal system. The new signal system will be state of the art and will include the replacement of all 110 miles of our old communication cable. The new system will feature fiber optic cable and also includes the replacement of all 450 traffic signal cabinets and control equipment. We should begin construction of the new signal system in early 2008. In the meantime, we are also working on several road improvement projects, including Friendly Avenue, Hilltop Road, East Market Street, and Greene Street.

Signals will be starting a project in the next month to install low cost, low power LED signal modules in the remaining NCDOT-owned signals around town. This is the third time we have done this type of project and our employees are performing this work on weekends. Our goal is to have all our signals upgraded to LED within 2 years.

We would like to congratulate **Keith Lovings** who has accepted a position as a Utility Coordinator for Engineering & Inspections effective April 16th. We wish Keith the best of luck in his new position.

We have a new employee, **Larry Josh Nelson**, who started May 16th in the signal construction section. Welcome Larry!



# E N G I N E E R I N G

The Engineering Division continues to work on strategic changes to the development ordinance. Revisions to street design standards are well underway. After several meetings of the Technical Advisory Team, we now have consensus for local street standards which will create more pedestrian friendly neighborhood streets. The new local street standards will feature a design speed of 25 MPH, corresponding vertical and horizontal curvature, a 26' face to face street width, and built-in traffic calming which should slow traffic in residential areas. At the request of City Council, the Engineering Division has also been working with TREBIC on creating a new "Cross Access" requirement in the City's Code of Ordinances. TREBIC and City staff have developed ordinance language that will require cross access between adjacent commercial properties along major and minor thoroughfares. We plan to take the Cross Access Ordinance to City Council for approval later this summer.

The Engineering Division continues to track the progress of several roadway and pedestrian improvement projects that are being constructed by the Engineering and Inspections Department. Hilltop Road is now complete from Stanley Road to Bridford Parkway. The section between Bridford and Adams Farm Parkway will be completed later this year. The long awaited Greene Street Transformation project in the heart of Downtown Greensboro featuring a roundabout and angled parking should be complete by June 16th. The Bass Chapel Road and Lake Jeanette Road Roundabout should be complete by July 12th. Improvements to Franklin Boulevard are well underway and should be complete spring 2007. The complicated and challenging Friendly Avenue improvement project is



underway and should be complete by fall 2007. East Market Street Streetscape improvements also continue. The NCDOT is currently replacing the bridge over US-29 which will feature streetscape enhancements similar to the Bessemer Avenue Bridge. The bridge replacement should be complete by spring 2007. Construction on East Market Street Streetscapes Phase II between US-29 and English Street should begin soon and should also be complete spring 2007. New Garden Road Phase II should start later this summer and be completed by fall 2007.

The Engineering Division has been working closely with the Planning Division to develop a Bicycle and Pedestrian plan to enhance bicycling and pedestrian activities in Greensboro. We have closely evaluated Greensboro's street network to determine appropriate bicycle accommodations along major and minor arterial streets. Where bicycle accommodations could not be developed along major arterials, parallel bicycle routes along collector streets were developed. We have developed pavement marking plans to enhance bicycling activities to Spring Garden Street, Florida Street, and Church Street which will be implemented this year with street resurfacing activities. The Engineering Division continues to enhance pedestrian activities through neighborhood traffic safety initiatives, pedestrian signalization, and enhanced pedestrian crossings featuring "bulb-outs" and textured crosswalks. A downtown "bulb-out" plan is currently being developed that will place curb extensions/bulb-outs at high volume pedestrian crossings. The bulb-outs will reduce pedestrian crossing distances, and reduce vehicular speeds.

## ***North Church Street Feasibility Study Complete***

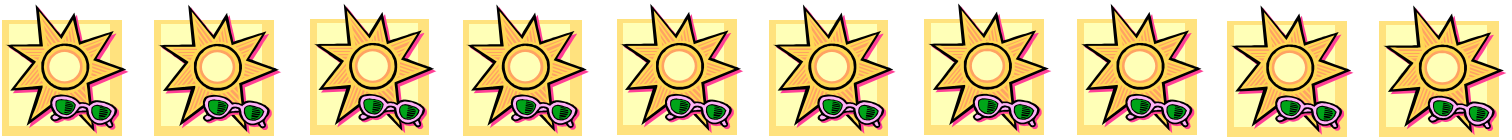
Beginning in the fall of 2005, GDOT contracted with Wilbur Smith Associates to conduct a feasibility study for improvements to North Church Street between East Wendover Avenue and East Cone Boulevard. This project was one that was identified for improvement as part of the November 2000 Transportation Bond Referendum.

The purpose of the study was to develop recommendations for the corridor that would safely and efficiently accommodate the projected increases in vehicle traffic volumes while also enhancing pedestrian, bicycle and transit safety and operations. Additionally, the roadway serves as a gateway to a variety of neighboring high-traffic venues such as Moses H. Cone Memorial Hospital and Cone Elementary School. It is also the home of varied industrial, commercial and

residential properties and several historically significant properties including Buffalo Presbyterian Church and the White Oaks New Town Historic District.

As part of the study, the team conducted a traffic analysis and determined that the roadway would require a 4/5 lane facility in order to handle existing and proposed traffic volumes. Additionally, the study evaluated existing accident patterns and conducted a preliminary review of potential environmental impacts. Several meetings were conducted throughout the process of the study including steering committee meetings comprised of various stakeholders and a series of three public meetings. These meetings were designed to gather public input and feedback in the development of the project recommendations.

*Continued on page 7*



# E N G I N E E R I N G

## ***Temporary Fix to Signal System***

Greensboro's current TransCore Series 2000 signal system was installed in 1992. Many components used in the system, while state-of-the-art at the time have grown completely obsolete. Communications between the central computer and the field controllers was accomplished through a series of serial interface boards manufactured by Mizar Corporation. These extremely critical components are no longer manufactured or serviced by anyone. The failure of one of these boards would kill communications to 8 channels which translates into a maximum of 56 separate signalized intersections. TransCore developed a replacement communications system based on a PC server rather than the serial interface boards and GDOT contracted to have our system upgraded. The PC-based communications are still very new and were in actual operation in only two cities when GDOT made the decision to upgrade. As is common with new technology, there were a few "bumps in the road" with the GDOT upgrade. TransCore worked with us to iron out the kinks and in fact just finished the project in mid May. This completion occurs just in time before severe weather season starts here in Greensboro, as the Mizar boards could be susceptible to lightning.



Other improvements with this upgrade include connectivity via the city computer network. This makes the signal system database and graphics available to signal technicians and other staff at their individual computer workstations. Our MIS department did a great job providing their essential support throughout the project.

While a replacement system is currently under design, it is a massive project and will require a few years work before it is controlling traffic on the streets. Our Series 2000 system is now configured to see Greensboro through until the new system is fully online.

## ***Cornwallis Drive Update***

The installation of islands, pedestrian crosswalks, and signage has been completed along Cornwallis Drive. These islands were installed to address concerns from the residents that live along Cornwallis between Lawndale Drive and Elm Street. The main concerns voiced were vehicle speeds and volumes. After a series of public meetings and a lot of neighborhood input and feedback, GDOT decided to install these islands to narrow pavement width and provide a refuge to pedestrians crossing Cornwallis Drive. Two islands were placed at four selected intersections. Each of these four intersections has pedestrian crossings on each of their four approaches. These crosswalks will go hand-in-hand with the sidewalks slated for installation next year. We will monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of the enhanced pedestrian crossings on vehicular behavior. Future enhancements to Cornwallis Drive will include sidewalk, painted edge-lines that could be used as bike lanes, and stamped brick patterns in the crosswalks.



GDOT Engineering would like to thank Signs and Markings as well as the new Field Operations Department for their coordination efforts and assistance with this project. This is the first project completed since the creation of the new department. This project had the potential to present major challenges. However the two departments utilized this as an opportunity to illustrate that through teamwork, joint projects can be completed seamlessly.

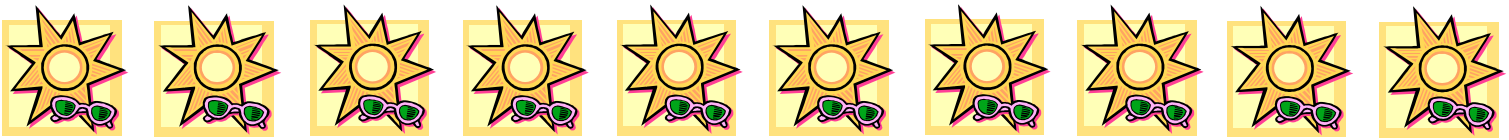
## ***CHURCH STREET, continued from page 6***

The resulting project recommendations for the corridor include the widening and construction of a 5-lane section with some sections of monolithic concrete islands and grass median construction where possible. Additionally, the cross section will accommodate bicycle lanes and sidewalks on both sides of the corridor and includes bus pullouts in two locations. You can view the final functional design on our website at <http://www.greensboro-nc.gov/Departments/GDOT/divisions/engineering/projects/church.htm>.

## ***Signal System Replacement***

Design of the Signal System Replacement is well underway. Currently the consultant is walking over 120 miles of proposed fiber optic cable routing with the utility companies in order to prepare utility make ready plans. They have covered about 50 miles so far and the utility walk-through is scheduled to be complete in July. Plans are also being developed to include up to 50 wi-fi hot-spots that will be used by MIS to create connections to the City's intranet via a wireless connection. A key element of the signal system replacement project will be the selection of the software to run the system. The consultant is working on an evaluation procedure to help specify the software that will best meet the needs of GDOT while meeting procurement requirements. Plans and specifications should be complete by July of 2007, and construction should begin in early 2008. Completion is anticipated in 2010.





# P L A N N I N G

## ***Bicycle Pedestrian and Greenways Plan***

The Greensboro Urban Area Metropolitan Planning Organization plans to complete its Bicycle, Pedestrian, and Greenways Plan in summer 2006. Community involvement has been a key part of this effort, including an extensive publicity campaign, a series of nine community workshops staged in two phases, and an online questionnaire that garnered over 700 responses. A great deal of technical work has gone into the plan. This includes a detailed assessment of current on-street bicycling conditions, and a review of long-term sidewalk construction needs. The plan covers the MPO area, including the City, much of Guilford County, and area towns. Additionally, the City of Greensboro, Guilford County, NCDOT, GTA, PART and the Council of Governments staff have been closely involved. The plan involves a special partnership with Parks & Recreation on the greenway trail planning component.



The plan focuses on implementation, from the short term through the long term. Short range implementation highlights include implementation of on-street bicycling improvements over the summer of 2006. These include the installation of bicycle lanes on Spring Garden Street from west of Holden Road to downtown and the installation of edge lines to narrow traffic lanes and create space for bicycling and parking on Florida Street.

## ***Walkable Communities Workshops***

The Metropolitan Planning Organization was chosen as a grant recipient by the National Center for Bicycling and Walking (NCBW) to host a series of Walkable Communities Workshops. These half day workshops were held March 27-31 throughout the community. The trainers focused on the ingredients of walkability and ways to make the community more walkable. Walking and biking audits were done in the neighborhoods where the workshops were held. These provided real-world examples, and were an important aspect to the workshops. A city staff briefing was also conducted, and a presentation by one of the trainers, Dr. Bob Chauncey was televised and added to the broadcast rotation on Channel 13 under the listing "BiPed Community". If you haven't seen it yet, be sure to watch!



## ***Fit Together Community Designation***

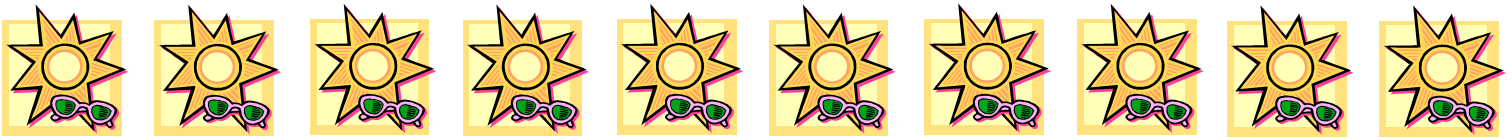
The City of Greensboro was recently awarded a Fit Together Community Designation. This program recognizes local government efforts to promote physical activity, healthy eating and tobacco-free programs, policies, environments and lifestyles. Greensboro was one of eight communities to receive the designation, and was recognized by Health and Wellness Trust Fund chair Lt. Governor Beverly Perdue and Blue Cross Blue Shield NC CEO Bob Greczyn at a special ceremony in Raleigh on May 17. Mayor Holiday was on hand at the ceremony on behalf of the City. The designation followed an application by the Guilford County Heart and Stroke Health partnership, a team including the City of Greensboro and GDOT staff.



## ***Battleground Rail Trail***

Phase 1 of the Battleground Rail Trail (BRT) will connect to the Lake Brandt Greenway north of Pisgah Church Road. The trail will roughly follow the historical alignment of the former Atlantic & Yadkin Railroad parallel to Battleground Avenue for approximately 1.1 miles, ending at Markland Drive near the Lawndale Crossing Shopping Center. The property drawings and construction plans for Phase 1 of the BRT are expected to be complete by June 2006, including the underpass at Cone Boulevard. Property acquisition is expected to be complete by early 2007. Construction of Phase 1 is expected to begin summer 2007 with completion anticipated in early 2008.





# P L A N N I N G

## ***Sidewalk Projects***

The City's sidewalk construction program is making strides in the community, with a considerable amount of new construction underway and upcoming. 19.8 miles of sidewalks are included in current city roadway and sidewalk construction projects, with about 90 miles of sidewalk expected to be completed within the next three to five years. Current highlights include recent and upcoming sidewalk projects on Lawndale Drive, McKnight Mill Road, Spring Garden Street, Elm Eugene Street and Holden road and current roadway projects on Hilltop Road, West Friendly Avenue, West Wendover Avenue, and Franklin Boulevard.



## ***System Planning Studies***

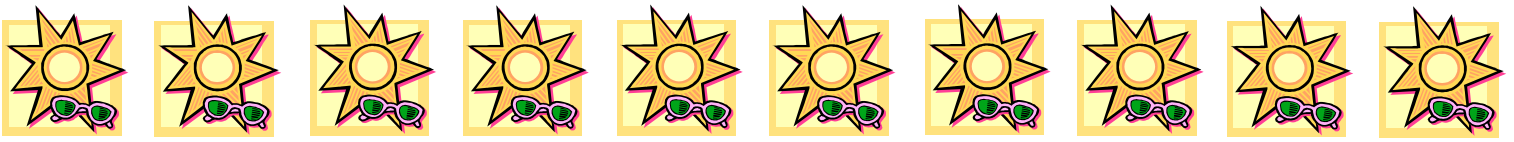
Two significant long-range roadway planning studies were recently conducted. The first provides an initial concept evaluation of potential changes to the Battleground Avenue Corridor between Fernwood Drive and Green Valley Road. The study is preparatory to a more formal project planning and design study, and looks ahead to the eventual abandonment of the rail line through the area and at possible roadway reconfigurations and routing for a future phase of the Battleground Rail Trail. Land uses, property access, current traffic patterns, expected future traffic growth, and pedestrian and bicycle access considerations were all important considerations. An approach for further study is recommended, including evaluation of the Wendover Avenue connections, a fuller review of land use and community considerations, and public involvement.

The second study concerns plans for the future roadway system in eastern Greensboro and Guilford County. Prompted by input from the Transportation Advisory Committee as well as the City's eastside Mixed-Use Corporate Park initiative, the study examines future routing and feasibility for 1) an extension of Florida Street and improvements along McConnell Road east to I-40, and 2) an extension of Young's Mill Road to connect to Ward Road just south of Wendover Avenue. Both facilities are recommended to have four lane-divided cross sections with sidewalk and bicycle accommodations. The study included evaluation of future traffic needs, preliminary environmental data, cost estimates, and stakeholder input, and recommendations for other area roadways. The study has changed some assumptions about the future route that these projects might take and has involved consultation with area economic developers, NCA&TSU, NCDOT and Guilford County. The recommendations will be helpful in consideration of future transportation priorities, opportunities to facilitate economic development, and in how east-side transportation improvements might be phased in over time.



## ***Transportation Improvement Program News***

Transportation funding continues to pose significant challenges at the state and national levels. NCDOT recently announced an anticipated \$720 million shortfall over the next three years. Initially, it was believed that North Carolina would receive a boost in transportation funds with the passage of the six year bill known as Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: a Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU). After much debate, the bill passed in August 2005 at a funding level of \$244 billion to be used for the remaining five year period (2005-2009). A positive sign was an increase in the minimum guarantee from the federal government. North Carolina is a donor state, which means for every dollar North Carolina sends to the federal government, only 90.5% is returned back to the state. The minimum guarantee was expected to gradually increase over the next five years to 92%. But, North Carolina is currently receiving an actual return of only about 86% as a result of the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina and other federal budget pressures. In addition, revenues generated for the state Highway Trust Fund are suffering from declining gas consumption and car sales and increasing costs for construction materials. Overall, the shortfall will lead to project delays statewide. It remains to be seen however, what the Draft 2007-2013 Transportation Improvement Program will hold for the Greensboro area when it is released later this year. Stay tuned for news on the MPO website and in future editions of the Traffic Zone.



# PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION

## ***GTA Operators Rank Top in Local and State Rodeo***

Several GTA Operators were represented again this year in both the State and Local Bus Operator Rodeos. The annual competition judges participants on their driving skills, personal appearance, pre-trip inspection and knowledge of wheelchair securement. It is a preliminary to the state competition, sponsored by the North Carolina Public Transportation Association and the NCDOT.

At the local rodeo held in March in Winston Salem, Robin Dillon placed 1st in the van cutaway category and Fred Jennings placed 1st in the fixed route category. Placing second in the fixed route category was GTA Operator Dexter Vines. Other operators who placed at the local rodeo in the van category are: Fred Hart, 3rd place, and Bluford Thompson, 5th place. Other operators placing in the fixed route category are: Bluford Thompson-5th place, Shantel Amadou-7th place, Amos Bradley-8th place, and Don Hatfield-13th place.

GTA Van Operator, Robin Dillon, placed 1st in the state competition as well, and is being sponsored by the NCPTA to compete in the 2-day national rodeo to be held in Orlando, Florida on June 3-4th. The national event brings professional operators from across North America. Urban as well as rural transit systems are represented, as well as human service agency operators.

The GTA Operators are all employees of Veolia Transportation, the contractor for Greensboro Transit Authority. GTA congratulates all of the winners in the rodeo competitions and wishes Robin much success as she competes on the national level!



## ***Fourth Year of Buses to Books Program To Begin***

This summer, the *Buses to Books* Summer Reading Program will mark its fourth year in helping to promote literacy among school-aged children in the Greensboro community. Established as a partnership between the Greensboro Public Library and the Greensboro Transit Authority, the program has been instrumental in encouraging civic-mindedness in today's youth by helping them to realize the benefits and role both the public library and public transportation play in the community.

The 10-week summer program seeks to encourage students between the ages of 6-17 to visit the library at least once a week. Students who present their library card at any branch library will be given a free weekly transit pass. Trips taken through this program last summer increased by more than 100 percent compared to the trips taken the prior summer. As an added incentive, students are encouraged to write an essay on why public transportation is important to the community. Winners of the writing contest are recognized by the Greensboro Transit Authority Board and given a special award.

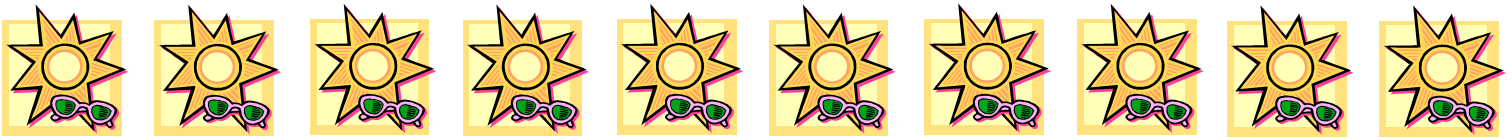
The 2006 Buses to Books Summer Reading Program will begin June 11, 2006 and continue through August 19, 2006. All participants must be students between the ages of 6 and 17. For more information, please contact Sharon Smiley, Transportation Planner, at 373-2182, or visit GTA online at [www.greensboro-nc.gov](http://www.greensboro-nc.gov).

## ***Members of GTA Task Force Make Recommendations for Service Improvements***

A GTA Task Force recently appointed by the Greensboro City Council to examine spiraling operating costs and growth in service recently made several recommendations to address the overcrowded issues on both the Fixed Route and SCAT Paratransit bus services. Among the recommendations made were a 1.5 cent tax increase, plus an annual 10-cent incremental increase for GTA base fare over the next three (3) years, raising the base fare to \$1.30 on Fixed Route and \$2.60 per trip on SCAT. A second proposal was the elimination of the \$35 unlimited monthly SCAT passes. It is projected that the money generated by the fare and tax increases would eliminate a projected budget shortfall during fiscal years 2006 and 2007. It is further projected that the money would also allow GTA to add services on the Fixed Route bus service, including 30-minute bus service weekdays on all GTA routes, as well as create a South-Town Connector that would allow riders to travel in south Greensboro without having to transfer at the depot. Many of the recommendations made by the Task Force are in keeping with the recommendations made in Mobility Greensboro, the city's long range public transportation study.

Other recommendations to the SCAT Service included changes to the No-Show and Cancellation policies. A public hearing to discuss all of the Task Force's recommendations and other city budgetary concerns took place on June 6th. If you would like to share your thoughts on the Task Force recommendations or any other City budget issues, call 373-CITY or go online at [www.greensboro-nc.gov](http://www.greensboro-nc.gov).





# PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION

## *The HEAT is on!*

It's almost time to catch some HEAT...and we're not talking about the weather.

The new HEAT (Higher Education Area Transit) service will begin Tuesday, August 8 and GTA along with its six institutional partners are getting ready for the debut. In a mere three months, ten new buses will be traveling the streets of Greensboro and Jamestown providing students and the general public with increased access to public transportation by the following new routes:

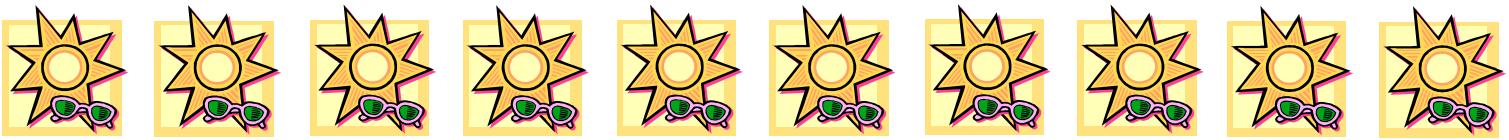
- *Route 70 – East HEAT – Bennett College, NCA&T, and GTCC Greensboro's Wendover campus*
- *Route 71 – West HEAT – Elon School of Law, Greensboro College, UNCG, and Guilford College*
- *Route 72 – City HEAT – A downtown circulator serving the entertainment district and other notable stops*
- *Route 73 – UNCG HEAT – Off-campus housing shuttle in the Spring Garden Street and Walker Avenue areas*
- *Route 74 – Tech HEAT – Express service to GTCC Jamestown*

Most of these routes will connect at the J. Douglas Galyon Depot, home of GTA, PART Express, Greyhound, Carolina Trailways and Amtrak. Passage on these HEAT routes will be fare-free for qualified students of the six financially-participating institutions: Bennett College, Elon University School of Law, Greensboro College, Guilford College, Guilford Technical Community College and University of North Carolina at Greensboro. For all others, the economical fare is the same as any GTA bus, only \$1 per trip with free transfers. Many students will be able to swipe their student identification cards for access. For others, fare cards will be issued by their school.

Promotion of the service has begun in earnest with visits to the campuses to talk about the new service and give away literature and promotional items. Extensive coverage of this unique service has been produced in the local media. To get students further involved in this important new service, a design contest was established to get student ideas on the design of the new vehicles. The grand prize winner received an Apple iPod, and two runner-ups were recognized as well.

In these last few months, many details are being finalized including construction of stops and shelters, receiving and designing the new buses and printing route maps and schedules. Also look for the debut of the HEAT television commercial during the Get Down! Town event in September. Make sure to visit the HEAT website for updates at [www.rideheat.com](http://www.rideheat.com). Most importantly, come August 8...make sure to Get Going. Get HEAT!





## GDOT's (Brick) Stamp of Approval

If you have walked across any of the intersections in the downtown area, you are sure to have treaded upon some elegantly bricked crosswalks. Or are they? Look closer...you may see that they are not real bricks, but imprinted asphalt delicately molded to simulate masonry. The GDOT Engineering division has chosen to integrate stamped crosswalks into many of the new streetscape projects. Known as street texturing, it combines the strength of cement with the flexibility of asphalt. Not only are the imprints aesthetically pleasing, but are less expensive than using real masonry. I recently watched the installation by CACTX Surfaces of Winston-Salem who was contracted for stamped crosswalks on Greene Street using the Street Print process.

The crew prepared the work area as any other in the vicinity of traffic by marking off the area with traffic cones for their safety as well as to direct the flow of traffic. After sweeping any debris that may be in the target area, they establish boundary guidelines by stretching string along the proposed crosswalk area and painting a single line of paint by which they will guide their equipment.

The texturing process begins with a giant pavement heater. This propane-fueled machine is capable of heating the asphalt up to 300 degrees Fahrenheit. Not enough to liquefy the surface, but to make the surface pliable and able to receive the desired indentations. To test the surface, the contractor will poke the asphalt with a screw driver to ensure that it is ready.

A metal template formed in the shape of a brick pattern is laid upon the heated surface and positioned. This pattern will repeat throughout the crosswalk, so it is important that each stamping is lined up perfectly if continuing a pattern.

Next, the workers start up the plate tamper to run over the metal. The tamper is similar to one used to compact dirt, jumping up and down as it is guided over the metal template, embedding the ironwork into the soft roadway. Although the broad pavement heater is used for heating most of the work area, the edges of the crosswalk are heated by a portable torch. The worker waves the wand along the area while another uses a much smaller piece of template and a hammer to tamp the areas missed by the larger equipment.

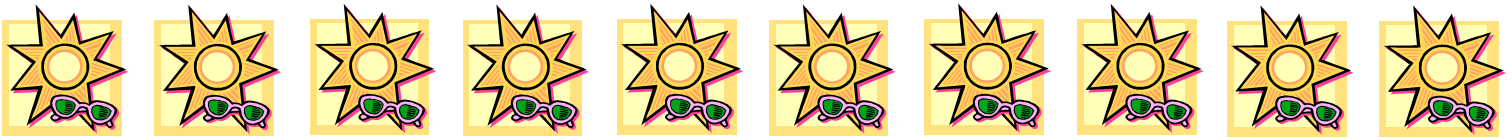
Next comes what the contractors describe as the most tedious...the detail work. They get down on their hands and knees with an electric chisel or a hammer and chisel, deepening the shallow areas. They also use this opportunity to finish up the pattern as it reaches the curbs to provide continuity all the way across the roadway.

The final task is to apply the color coating, but this is not merely red paint. Specifically, it is a polymer-cement coating that gives strength and durability to the surface. Similar in color to real bricks, the coating is applied across the work area and given time to dry. The coating needs a minimum roadway temperature of 50 degrees to adhere properly, but on this day where the predicted high was 92 degrees, meeting the minimum would not be a problem.

*Continued on page 13*







*BRICK, continued from page 12*

With that, the stamping work is done. GDOT marking crews will follow shortly, applying a white crosswalk border to contrast nicely with the newly decorated surface. When asked what is the most dangerous part of this job, you might think that it would be working with superheated equipment, flammable gases, or even the elements. Instead, the contractors respond with one word...traffic. Something to remember as you pass these, or any other work zones.

The life expectancy of the texturing work is about five to seven years. The flexibility of the asphalt allows easy accessibility to underground utilities should the occasion arise, and reinstallation is inexpensive and relatively seamless. You can see more completed texturing projects on Spring Garden Street and the East Market Street Corridor. To the average person, you would be hard pressed to tell the difference between texturing and real bricks, but nonetheless, it makes a beautiful addition to the ever growing roadways of Greensboro.



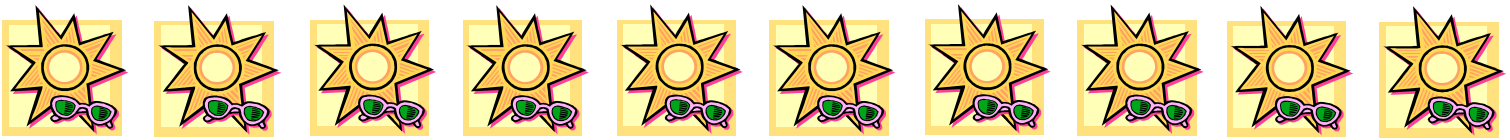
## ***Help in time of crisis***

No one will deny that life today can be very taxing. Increased responsibilities at home, work, and a number of other real and perceived obligations can wear down even the best of us. Unfortunately for some, when life becomes a little too much to bear, they may choose to take extreme measures in an attempt to resolve their issues, including suicide. A High Point man recently did just that, electing to end his life at the Bellemeade Street Parking Deck.

If you find the pressures mounting on you at work, home or wherever, there are places to turn for help. For City employees and their family members, you can contact the Employee Assistance Program (EAP) where you can schedule an appointment with a licensed therapist. The EAP counselors can help you with a wide range of problems such as depression, marital issues or abuse. Just call 282-6626 and identify yourself as a City employee or family member. All appointments and the problems discussed are strictly confidential, and the initial assessment and counseling services are free of charge.

For non-City employees, help is also just a phone call away by contacting United Way 211 Information and Referral. Dial 211 from any touch-tone phone or 1-800-CALL-211 and get help from a number of community services, many free of charge. When life gets tough, help is there.





## *Walking the Red Carpet at the Inaugural Q Awards*

Flashbulbs popping, glittering stars walking the red carpet ...sounds like the Grammy or Emmy Awards? No, it was better than that! It was the Inaugural "Q" Awards!

On May 17 GDOT came together once again at Bur-Mil Park for the semi-annual Quality Luncheon and its newest component...the Q Awards, recognizing the team members to best exemplified the quality effort at GDOT. A total of 17 nominations were received before the deadline and the winners were recognized with Q's, but first let's recap the luncheon portion.

The event began with a catered lunch in the Triple Crown Room beautifully decorated by **Lydia McIntyre**. Each place setting found a complimentary tin of mints proudly bearing the QSP logo. At the start of the program, a special guest was recognized. City Manager Mitch Johnson was able to break away from his duties downtown to spend some time with GDOT and learn first hand about the latest happenings in GDOT.

At the start of the Quality Program, **Jim Westmoreland** spoke to the newly sized GDOT, a room of approximately 80 attendees to encourage the staff to continue its commitment to quality. Jim mentioned that the public doesn't always voice affirmation of everything we do, but the work GDOT does has a major impact on all aspects of our city. This is evident from the positive feedback from the strategic outreach done some years ago. But some recognition has come through

national channels as well as in the local media and he appreciated all the work being put into our duties. Although the workload has increased steadily on our department, we were encouraged to press ahead, continue the good work and always look for ways of improvements.

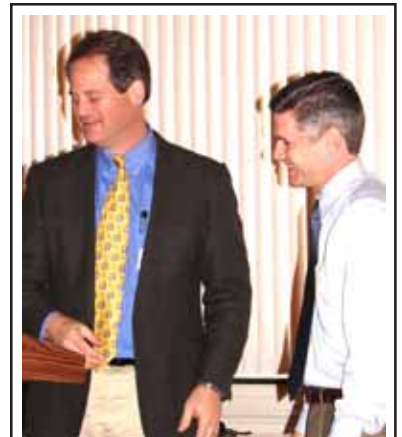
Following Jim's remarks, City Manager Mitch Johnson stepped forward to first recognize Jim for his 10 years tenure with the City. Then, unbeknownst to Jim, Mitch led the group in a chorus of Happy Birthday for this day was also Jim's birthday.

After the celebration had died down, Mitch spoke about the tremendous job that GDOT has always done, typically leading the City in its various initiatives and

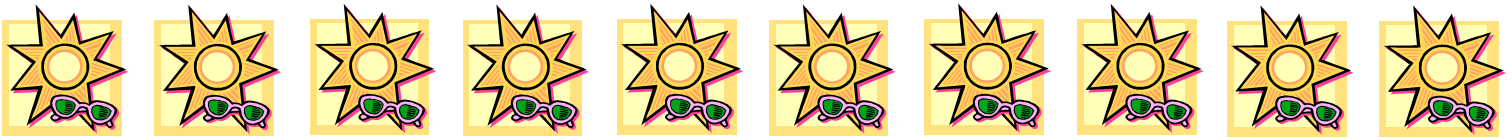
procedures. He referenced his mother, who he said consistently praises the City of Greensboro for its efficient signage system, even pointing out deficiencies in other locales in comparison. He encouraged GDOT team members to continue its commitment to quality and doing the fantastic job they are doing.

The division quality reports began in earnest with GTA's **Bruce Adams** speaking for Public Transportation Manager **Libby James** about their continuing counting of bus stop amenities and areas desiring additional attention. Whether it was shelters, benches, trash cans or signage, their effort would look to improve the satisfaction of both riders and non-riders in the maintenance of the amenities.

*Continued on page 15*







AWARDS, continued from page 14

Engineering Manager **Adam Fischer** provided summaries of the Request for Services survey responses that would help their team work to identify areas for improvement in the public service. They mailed out 194 random surveys to persons that had requested a service from Engineering. They received a very respectable 36% return rate providing useful information including satisfaction with their contacts and courtesy of the engineering representative. The resulting information will be used to develop performance measures, evaluate policies and procedures, utilize Datastream and continue to survey at the end of provided services.

**Tyler Meyer** spoke for Planning about their continued identification of pedestrian needs and the resources required to meet them.

Finally, Mike Cramer spoke briefly about the continued work in Parking and Admin. With the adjustment of adding Signs and Signals to the Division, they will integrate them into the quality fold with their own initiatives for the work that they do.

The Director's Quality challenge, also addressed by Mike, spoke of targeting radius improvements in the city. He showed examples of intersections where the obvious signs of vehicles tracking over the shoulders represented a need for action. To kick off the radius improvements effort, it would become the theme of the July and August Back to Basics, garnering additional points for identification and reporting.

Speaking of B2B...**Sandy Munroe**, a member of the Back to Basics Committee announced the evolution of the program into Back to Basics Xtreme...bringing an Xtreme focus on identifying and reporting repair items around the city. You can learn more about the new B2B Xtreme in this newsletter.

Next up was the Service Awards. Nine employees were recognized for the length of service time they have spent with the City of Greensboro. They are the following:

- **Bruce Adams** – 5 years
- **Marcel Edwards** – 5 years
- **Michael Matthews** – 10 years
- **Sandy Munroe** – 10 years
- **Avery Simmons** – 10 years
- **Charles Greene** – 20 years
- **Tim Hulon** – 25 years
- **James “Ray” Yates** – 35 years

And of course, Jim Westmoreland was recognized earlier for his 10-year anniversary.

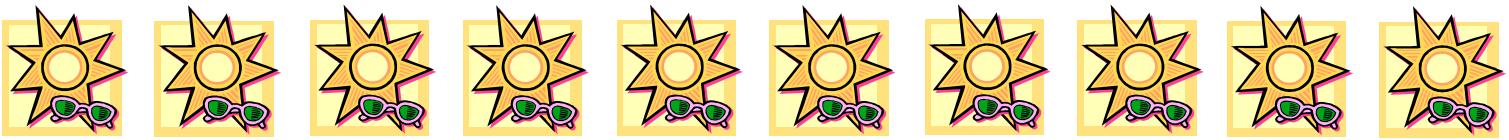
Finally, what the attendees were all waiting for. The music started, and the announcer welcomed the attendees to the 1st “Q” Awards featuring nominees and winners for the Trailblazer, At Your Service and Quality Star Awards. Planning Division's Lydia McIntyre did a fantastic job serving as host of the awards patterned after popular celebrity music and entertainment award shows. No awards show would be complete without the glamorous model handing out the trophies, and Engineering's Liz Carpenter filled the role perfectly, shattering the stereotype of the typical engineer as she strode down the red carpet with an award in hand.

Following a description of the categories by Lydia, the first award nominees were announced for the Trailblazer. They were:

- **Wesley Gregory**, Parking who fabricated a steel replacement for a damaged railing at the Davie Street Parking Deck, reducing the extra expense of repairing the original aluminum.

*Continued on page 16*





AWARDS, continued from page 15

- **Derek Parker**, Signs and Markings who made a tool to speed up the work process in removing sign channels and increase safety.
- **Chris Spencer**, Engineering who implemented a time tracking system using Microsoft Access to better prioritize time spent on Engineering projects or work.
- **Jeff Teague**, Parking who took the initiative to secure a supplier to provide needed janitorial supplies on time and at a lower cost.

The winner: Wesley Gregory

The next nominees for the At Your Service were the following:

- **Kenneth Angel**, Signals for his beneficial assistance to city departments and employees and keeping the city's intersections running effectively.
- **Antwyan Jones**, Business & Operations for his dedication in his work as GDOT's fire marshall and commitment to the safety of all GDOT employees.
- **Kay Martin**, Parking for her excellent customer service even during times of personal adversity.
- **Kay Martin and Elizabeth Black**, Parking for their customer service at the Church Street Parking Deck keeping customers as their number one priority.
- **Sandy Munroe**, Signals who has gone above and beyond to serve the public by removing trash and hazards from the street, pushing stalled cars, and working to landscape and fix other people's yards.
- **Linda Paschal**, Admin for her conscientious effort to take care of her internal and external customers, even while on annual leave.

- **Vince Price and Chuck Greene**, Signs and Markings for their work with the Police Department creating Motorcycle Police Identification tags.
- **Carrie Reeves**, Engineering for her professional and consistent work with the development community on plan reviews.

The winners: Vince Price and Chuck Greene

The final Quality Star Award nominees were:

- **Margie Chrismon**, Admin for serving as the customer service cheerleader through continuous training, team building and motivation to her staff.
- **Marcel Edwards**, Admin for her system of efficient filing upon relocation to the MMOB.
- **The Meter Maintenance Crew -Don Norman, Supervisor, Wesley Gregory and Scott Jones**, Parking who strive for quality in all areas of maintenance and repair to keep the City's Parking Decks in good repair and appearance.
- **Joe Mullinax**, Engineering for his work on the Cone and Orange traffic signal implementation project
- **Chris Spencer**, Engineering for the intense conversion project of switching the City traffic cameras to full motion video.

The winner: Chris Spencer.

The program wrapped up with a few final remarks from Jim Westmoreland and the music accompanied the attendees in their departure, looking forward to the next Quality luncheon and Q Award.

